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Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations

Report of the President of the Council on consultations held with the Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

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I. Introduction

1. At its substantive session of 2002, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2002/30 of 25 July 2002 on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations.

2. In paragraph 17 of its resolution 57/133 of 11 December 2002, the General Assembly requested the Council to continue to consider, in consultation with the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, appropriate measures for coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system in implementing the relevant resolutions of the Assembly.

3. Information submitted by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations on their activities in relation to Non-Self-Governing Territories is set out below.

II. Support to Non-Self-Governing Territories by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations

4. According to the information provided by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations, during the period under review, a number of specialized agencies and organizations have continued to provide assistance to the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories in response to the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Special Committee. A number of organizations have extended or formulated such programmes of assistance from within their own budgetary resources, in addition to their respective contributions as executing agencies of projects funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the primary provider of assistance.

5. A number of assistance projects have continued to be funded by UNDP, in close collaboration with other agencies and organizations.

A. Economic and Social Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

6. Of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat and the United States Virgin Islands maintain an active relationship with ECLAC. More recently, indications of interest have been received from the Cayman Islands and also from the Turks and Caicos Islands with respect to participation in the activities of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC).

7. The Committee was established in 1975 as a permanent subsidiary body of ECLAC, to act as a coordinating body for whatever activities relating to development and cooperation may be agreed upon and to serve as an advisory and consultative body to the Executive Secretary of ECLAC in respect of Caribbean

issues and circumstances. The secretariat of the Committee is the secretariat of ECLAC acting principally through the subregional office in Port-of-Spain. The four Non-Self-Governing Territories indicated as maintaining a relationship with ECLAC are associate members of the Committee.

8. Over the years, these Non-Self-Governing Territories have been among the most active elements of the Committee. One of the major features of the Committee is its provision to the Non-Self-Governing Territories of access to the global forum that is the United Nations, as well as to its agencies and programmes, in which the Territories are able to promote and advance their developmental aspirations. Through this modality, the Territories are effectively integrated into the technical cooperation programmes of the United Nations system and of certain other intergovernmental organizations.

9. In this same vein, the Committee has facilitated the participation, of Non-Self-Governing Territories as observers, in world conferences in the economic and social spheres. With this kind of support, the Territories have been very active participants in such forums as the International Conference on Population and Development (1994), the United Nations Global Conference on Small Island Developing States (1994), the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995). The follow-up processes in connection with the implementation of the respective Plans of Action adopted at these global forums are also accessible to the Territories.

10. Over the years, ECLAC, in the execution of its mandate, has provided advisory services and technical assistance to Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat, at their request. Areas covered in this regard include the preparation of post-disaster assessment reports following hurricanes (Anguilla); the conduct of workshops on the methodology for conducting studies on macroeconomic, social and environmental impacts of hurricanes and other natural disasters in the immediate post-disaster period (British Virgin Islands); the reformulation of a tourism sector plan in the wake of the volcanic eruption; and a review of the implications of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas establishing the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (Montserrat).

11. Other areas of support provided by the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat to the Non-Self-Governing Territories may be gleaned from various secretariat publications, which have covered such themes as the effects of sustained immigration in the Cayman Islands, the British Virgin Islands and the United States Virgin Islands.

12. In the context of the responsibility of ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean with regard to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[1] the Non-Self-Governing Territories, as associate members, are among the Caribbean small island developing States on whose behalf, with ECLAC functioning as the technical secretariat, a joint work programme extrapolated from the Programme of Action is implemented by an inter-agency collaborative group comprising more than two dozen regional and wider international agencies, including members of the United Nations system. Within these arrangements, efforts are made to integrate social, economic and environmental components of action towards the sustainable development of these Territories.

13. At the nineteenth session of CDCC, which was held in Port-of-Spain, on 14 and 15 March 2002, a recommendation was made that the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat resume the initiative commenced in the 1990s to promote the increased participation of the associate members in the activities of the wider United Nations system.

B. Office on Drugs and Crime

14. The Global Programme against Money Laundering participated in an International Monetary Fund (IMF) Offshore Financial Assessment of the British Virgin Islands from 12 to 22 November 2002. A staff member from the Programme accompanied the mission to the British Virgin Islands as the financial expert, and contributed advice on the anti-money-laundering or counter-financing of the terrorism component of the IMF assessment.

C. United Nations Development Programme

15. During the period under review, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provided assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories under two kinds of programmes, namely assistance programmes supported by the UNDP office in Barbados and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) to the economic, social and political development of Non-Self-Governing Territories; and the disaster mitigation, capacity-building and institutional strengthening project in support of Montserrat's post-emergency resettlement programme (MOT/98/001 and MOT/98/H01).

1. Assistance programmes supported by the United Nations Development Programme office in Barbados and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States to the economic, social and political development of Non-Self-Governing Territories

British Virgin Islands

16. The British Virgin Islands is a second-time net contributor country and is not eligible for transitional target for resources assignment from the core (TRAC) resource assignments. Indications are that, while in principle, agreement exists for programmes to be developed and funded with government cost-sharing, the administration of the British Virgin Islands indicates a preference for accessing technical assistance and expertise from the global open market, stating that it can source this assistance at more competitive rates than the United Nations system.

17. However, the British Virgin Islands, like the other British overseas territories accesses assistance under regional programmes such as the Comprehensive Disaster Management Project,[2] which supported the formulation of a National Disaster Management Plan for the British Virgin Islands. The British Virgin Islands will also access expertise and support from the recently approved search and rescue project (RLA/02/012).[3]

Anguilla

18. In response to requests from the Government of Anguilla for assistance in formulating poverty-alleviation strategies, UNDP provided assistance to the

Anguilla administration to develop relationships with non-governmental organizations and provide institutional strengthening inputs to the Ministry of Social Development. These discussions were held in the context of the resource situation for the Government of Anguilla with the current non-reimbursable track of US$ 110,000 and expected government cost-sharing of US$ 200,000 for the Subregional Cooperation Framework programming period (2001-2003). UNDP provided assistance as follows:

(a) Consultancies which facilitated the restructuring of the Ministry of Social Development and particularly the Community Development Department, as well as the integration of non-governmental organizations into community development;

(b) Technical expertise in support of a low-input hydroponics project and the Constitutional Reform Programme. An adviser in the area of constitutional reform supported the work of Constitutional and Electoral Reform Committee of Anguilla. Both programmes are completed;

(c) Capacity support for the Ministry of Finance in areas under the UNDP/Caribbean Technical Assistance Credit programme;[4]

(d) Budget formulation;

(e) Economic research and data analysis;

(f) Revenue and taxation, including a review of the legislative framework.

Other areas identified for support include:

(a) Employment creation and an associated assessment of the possible input of the Anguilla Development Board into microenterprise entrepreneurship;

(b) Support for HIV/AIDS programmes;

(c) Assistance in the cultural development of the country;

(d) Fostering sports as a development tool among youth.

Montserrat

Disaster mitigation, capacity-building and institutional strengthening project in support of Montserrat's post-emergency resettlement programme (MOT/98/001 and MOT/98/H01)

19. Following the volcanic activity in the mid-1990s, Montserrat was designated as a country in special development circumstances. Support from the UNDP office in Barbados and the OECS subregional office focuses on disaster mitigation and institutional strengthening and capacity-building (MOT/98/001).

20. The disaster management and institutional strengthening project in support of Monsterrat's post-emergency resettlement programme (MOT/98/001) was initiated in 1999 and involves support to the Government of Monsterrat through the placement of United Nations Volunteers in key strategic physical and social infrastructure areas. At present, international United Nations Volunteers are providing support in: geographic information systems, architecture, occupational therapy, with specific emphasis on support to the disabled and elderly and civil engineering. A United Nations Volunteers computer software engineer supports the Montserrat Volcano Observatory. The Observatory is a statutory Government body

responsible for real-time monitoring of the Soufrière Hills volcano, in order to provide forecasts and timely warnings of escalating volcanic activity for the safety of the population. The monitoring programme also provides information for hazard and risk assessment for use by the authorities in decision-making and development planning.

21. Under MOT/98/H01, UNDP is supporting the implementation of an integrated vulnerability assessment of the situation in Montserrat. This analysis will provide guidance on disaster vulnerability to development planners and private sector initiatives over the next 25 years. The consultancy for this work started in March 2002 and is to be completed in the first quarter of 2003. It is having a significant positive impact on the emergency and disaster planning for the island. Montserrat is now looking to market its experiences as a model for other countries as one that has moved through crisis and been able to rebuild successfully.

22. Five international United Nations Volunteers are attached to the project at present, four of whom are funded by the United Kingdom Department for International Development, and the fifth through the Government of Japan. A new memorandum of understanding between the Department for International Development and UNDP was signed in September 2002 for additional funding of US$ 360,000. This will facilitate the placement of an additional eight international United Nations Volunteer years (which may also be utilized for national United Nations Volunteer or transfer of knowledge through expatriate nationals modalities) until March 2006. A sixth United Nations Volunteer will assume his or her functions as a physiotherapist in May 2003 and will establish physiotherapy services for the island and train existing medical personnel in physiotherapy techniques.

2. Global Environment Facility/Small Grants Programme: British overseas territories

23. There has been little interaction between the Global Environment Facility/Small Grants Programme and the British overseas territories in the Caribbean. Part of the problem revolved around the eligibility of the British overseas territories for GEF financing, since it was construed that these islands were part of the system of government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. However, the Small Grants Programme subsequently gave approval for expansion into these countries and the following describes the actions taken in that regard to date.

Anguilla

24. Two projects were approved for Anguilla in March 1997: the Turtle Conservation Project of the Anguilla National Trust received a grant for US$ 15,544 to raise the awareness of nationals about the need to conserve sea turtles, particularly their nesting grounds on the beach. Project activities included both the production of popular education material and their dissemination to schools and fisherfolk, and the control of poaching by fishermen and other consumers.

25. The amount of US$ 20,054 was approved for the other project, entitled "Protecting the Environment from Overgrazing by Livestock" to enable the National Farmers Association of Anguilla to address issues related to soil degradation arising from compacting of farmland caused by overgrazing of cattle. These problems affected soil fertility and yield from their vegetable farms.

Montserrat

26. There has been extensive communication between Global Environment Facility/Small Grants Programme and a number of non-governmental organizations in Montserrat. However, no site visits have been carried out to date, although project concepts have been submitted. During March 2003, a project entitled "Conservation of Biodiversity: Trails Viewing Platforms from Baker Hill to Katy Hill-Protection of the Montserrat Oriele Bird and the Mountain Chicken" was submitted by the Cudjoe Head Community Club, from the community of Cudjoe Head. The project, valued at US$ 50,000, is being reviewed and will be submitted to the Regional Steering Committee shortly.

27. Discussions are under way with the United Kingdom Department for International Development to identify commonalities and the possibility of joint programming in the administration of a small grants environmental fund targeting the British overseas territories. Should these discussions bear fruit, much more resources will be available to support small-scale environment projects in the Global Environment Facility/Small Grants Programme thematic areas.

British Virgin Islands

28. Although the Small Grants Programme has conducted a site visit to these islands, no project has been supported thus far. The Programme intends to support the building of local capacities and identify host non-governmental organizations and other partners in the second quarter of 2003.

D. United Nations Children's Fund

29. The three Territories of Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and the British Virgin Islands are supported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Caribbean Area Office as part of its multi-country programme. The main programme areas and key interventions implemented in all three Territories include:

(a) Early childhood development. The programme interventions include sensitization, policy dialogue, teacher training and curriculum, including quality assessment of early childhood development centres. Planned interventions for 2003 and beyond also include support to parenting, integration of early childhood development services, HIV/AIDS and integration of child rights education into parenting.

(b) Adolescents and youth interventions include health and family life education — teacher training, curriculum, training materials, life skills and HIV/AIDS prevention and peer education for in-school and out-of-school children and peer education through partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Interventions planned for 2003 and beyond include improving national capacity for health and family life education, strategic planning of, and support to, adolescent and youth component in the national HIV/AIDS strategic plans and policy support for a rights approach to assisting orphans.

(c) Children's rights and child protection. The programme has supported an assessment of social services to children in need of care and protection and, with the finalization of ICRC reports, brought increased awareness with regard to child abuse prevention. Interventions planned for 2003 and beyond include public education on

children's rights, strengthening national mechanisms for monitoring of children's rights and of child abuse reporting, and integration of children with disabilities and children infected and/or affected by HIV/AIDS into national social protection systems.

(d) In Western Sahara UNICEF has been providing vaccines for a routine expanded programme on immunization in the Saharawi refugee camps of Tindouf. In May 2002, the confirmation of a single case of polio wild virus in the Tindouf camp led to the organization of two "mop-up" campaigns in the camps. The campaigns were synchronized with the Governments of Mauritania and Morocco and undertaken in collaboration with the Saharawi Ministry of Health in Algeria, the World Health Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNICEF. UNICEF provided all the oral polio vaccine and the cool boxes.

30. With regard to UNICEF activities in Western Sahara, the country programme recommendations for the Algeria Programme of Cooperation 2002-2006 explicitly refers to providing support, in collaboration with UNHCR, WFP and the Red Crescent Society, for refugee children living in the national territory. UNICEF has carried out a number of visits to assess the needs of Saharawi refugees in relation to child health, education and youth.

31. Expanded programme on immunization. Since 1999, UNICEF has been providing vaccines for routine immunization. UNICEF ensures a functioning cold chain as well as a supply of vaccines. The Algerian Ministry of Health has agreed to the use of the cold chamber in Tindouf hospital to maintain the main stock of vaccines. UNICEF is currently assessing other inputs to ensure protection of the vaccines during routine vaccine activities in the camp: this is likely to include cold boxes and small fridges. In 2002, UNICEF, WHO, UNHCR, the Saharawi and the Algerian Ministry of Health participated in the polio "mop-ups" following the wild virus case that was confirmed in the camp.

32. The Saharawi, with assistance from Algeria, UNHCR and non-governmental organizations, have done much to ensure access to basic education for children. Both primary and junior secondary level schools are run by trained Saharawi education staff. Many of the Saharawi children go on to secondary school in Algeria and other countries, while many drop out of the system and find themselves back in the camps with few opportunities in terms of training or work opportunities.

33. UNICEF has recently signed an agreement with Enfants Refugiés du Monde for an education project for primary school children. The project includes the training of teachers in interactive methodologies and materials.

34. UNICEF is also focused on early childhood development and supports activities related to providing information on women's rights, legal advice, and literacy training for young girls.

E. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

35. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) continues to provide technical assistance in the areas of food security, agriculture, forestry and fisheries activities, as well as rural development in general. It has been working to assist small island developing States following the 1999 Special Ministerial

Conference on Agriculture in Small Island Developing States, which was held at FAO headquarters. FAO has recently indicated that it will participate in the Inter-Agency Task Force for the international meeting on small island developing States to be held in 2004.

F. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Turks and Caicos Islands

36. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has been carrying out project activities in the field of small and medium-sized enterprise development in the Turks and Caicos Islands since July 2000, in cooperation with UNDP. The project aims at employment and income generation among the Belonger population, with the final objective of curbing migration from the lesser developed islands to Grand Turk and Providenciales.

37. Activities have focused on the strengthening of local support institutions. A Small Enterprise Development Centre was established within the Turks and Caicos Investment Agency (TCInvest) to provide business assistance that is adapted to the needs of local entrepreneurs. As at November 2002, more than 900 persons had benefited from the services offered by the Centre — the first of its kind in the Turks and Caicos Islands. The Centre's services, which were developed with UNIDO assistance, include entrepreneurship training courses, short-term managerial and technical training and seminars and business advisory and extension services. To date, 95 enterprises have been started up or expanded and 87 jobs generated as a result of the Centre's services.

38. The Centre has been cooperating closely with banks and other private sector organizations and has established strong relationships with public instructions in the Turks and Caicos Islands. Banks operating in the Turks and Caicos Islands have adopted the Centre's business plan format for use by their clients.

39. Future activities will concentrate on the improvement of the policy and regulatory environment. In this context, a survey has been conducted to identify the major constraints faced by local entrepreneurs.

Notes

[1] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] The project will reduce vulnerability to loss of life and property damage through the development of a comprehensive disaster management strategy as a viable process in the Caribbean region by supporting the development of regional comprehensive disaster management, strengthening the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) to implement comprehensive disaster management at the regional level efficiently and building support for comprehensive disaster management at the national level. It is expected that a number of countries will incorporate comprehensive disaster management into their overall development strategies. CDERA, as the regional implementation agency of the Comprehensive Disaster Management Project, will lead the process.

[3] The project seeks to strengthen the disaster preparedness and response capacity of the CDERA community through the creation of a framework for the establishment of a capacity for search and rescue in the Caribbean.

[4] The US$ 10.5m multi-donor UNDP/Caribbean Technical Assistance Credit programme to support economic and financial management in the Caribbean is providing advice and training in fiscal, monetary, financial and related statistical areas. Technical assistance is being provided in budget and treasury management, tax and customs policy administration, banking and offshore financial sector supervision through short-term consultancies, in-country workshops, regional training seminars and attachment of national staff.